

Chronicle



Professor Maria Prost DVM, PhD (1921–2014)

Professor Maria Prost was born on January 27, 1921 in Drohobycz, Lviv province. She acquired the diploma of a veterinary doctor in 1950 at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. In 1947, still during her studies, she started work as a research and teaching assistant in the Department of Parasitology and Invasive Diseases in the faculty. From the beginning of scientific career her interests concerned zoological issues, mainly fish parasitology. In 1964 she was appointed the Head of the Department of Fish Diseases and held the position until 1991. She retired in 1991.

The process of obtaining academic degrees and titles by Prof. Maria Prost was as follows: in 1955 she earned a PhD in Biological Sciences at the University of Warsaw with a thesis entitled „Monogenoidea in gills of fish in the Vistula river”; in 1963 she obtained a postdoctoral degree in the field of fish diseases at the Veterinary Faculty of the Agricultural University in Lublin on the basis of habilitation thesis: „Investigations on the development and pathogenicity of *Dactylogyrus anchoratus* (Duj., 1845) and *D. extensus* Mueller et v. Cleave, 1932 for breeding carps”; in 1971 she received the academic title of professor extraordinarius, and in 1980 of professor ordinarius.

Prof. Maria Prost devoted her scientific life mainly to fish parasitology. Her experimental work related to ectoparasitic flatworms belonging to the class Monogenea. She diagnosed the species in farm-raised fish and those in natural bodies of water in Poland on the basis of microscopic morphological observation. She described 9 newly

discovered species of parasites of the class Monogenea and dozens of species of parasites from this group new to the Polish fauna. In recognition of her achievements, two species of these parasites were given her name by foreign parasitologists dealing with this group of trematodes. They are: *Gyrodactylus prostae* described by Czech Radim Ergens in 1963 and *Dactylogyrus prostae* described by Hungarian Kallman Molnar in 1964.

In addition, she carried out comparative studies on Monogenea fauna of fish in the Polish water reservoirs and the Mediterranean and the Adriatic Seas. She identified and described previously unknown ontogenetic development of certain species of Monogenea. An interesting direction of research was to assess the impact of environmental conditions on the state of Monogenea parasitofauna in fish. Her study activities related to practical issues, especially preventive and therapeutic methods to combat Monogenea of farmed fish. With equal success she undertook problems in fish immunology.

Professor Maria Prost’s review papers related mainly to the description of new disease entities of fish unknown in Poland at that time, as well as general biological issues pertaining to phenomena of life in animals and plants, and some novel developments in molecular biology. Overall scientific achievement comprises 98 publications, including 43 experimental works and 55 review papers. In addition, Prof. Maria Prost is the author of three editions of the textbook entitled „Diseases of Fish” and 6 editions of course books „Viral and bacterial diseases of fish” and „Parasitic diseases of fish”.

Prof. Maria Prost was a particularly valued educator. She delivered interesting lectures and tutorials for students of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine on the subject Biology and Diseases of Fish. She frequently commented on teaching biology and fish diseases in veterinary faculties, also in the pages of scientific journals. She received

the Medal of Commission of National Education and the Rector awards for didactic activity. She enjoyed widespread sympathy thanks to excellent contact with young people, kindness and fairness in the assessment of students.

Prof. Maria Prost actively participated in the development of research personnel, among other things, as a promoter of 5 research doctorates. She repeatedly assessed doctoral and habilitation theses, achievements of candidates for scientific degrees and titles, research projects, papers before their publication in reputable journals.

Prof. Maria Prost served many functions in non-university institutions related to science. Several times she was a member of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Parasitology, the Polish Academy of Sciences (since 1975); a member of the Committee of Veterinary Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences (1981–1983); the Parasitological Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences (1993–1995); the Lublin Branch of the Polish Society of

Veterinary Sciences (from 1950); a member (since 1953) and president of the Lublin Branch (1982–1985 and 2000–2002); a member of the Polish Parasitological Society, the Polish Hydrological Society (since 1963) and the president of the Ichtiopathological Section of the Polish Society of Veterinary Sciences (until 1991).

Prof. Maria Prost was characterized by high personal culture, great understanding, peacefulness and willingness to help others. She was an excellent and demanding manager with a broad theoretical and practical knowledge, which she gladly shared with colleagues. She permanently became a part of the history of Lublin Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

Professor Maria Prost died on 16 April 2014. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Lipowa Street in Lublin.

Prof. dr hab. Antonina Sopińska